

REMARKS

The Examiner has rejected Claim 13 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Such rejection is deemed overcome in view of the clarifications made to the claims hereinabove.

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1-15, 19-25, and 27-29 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Abraham et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,983,270. Applicant respectfully disagrees with this rejection, especially in view of the clarifications made to the claims hereinabove.

Specifically, with respect to Claim 1 et al., the Examiner relies on the col. 2, lines 31-60 and col. 7 from Abraham to meet applicant's claimed "second data processing unit adapted to process incoming packets according to one of said plurality of instruction sets." In particular, the Examiner points to Abraham's "filter executive" to meet such claim language.

Such, excerpts, however, merely suggest that the "filter executive:"

"... provides communication and policy processing between the database 72 and a filter engine 78 that actually filters the IP packets passing through the network server 50. The filter executive 76 loads the policies for each user collected by the database 72, optimizes them into a set of rules for each user, and provides the optimized rules to the filter engine 78.

The filter engine 78 filters all IP packets passing through the network server 50 using the rules for each user provided by the filter executive 76. The contents of the IP packets contain the information necessary to determine if the IP packets comply with the rules in effect. If an IP packet does not comply, the IP packet may be discarded by the filter engine 78 and thus, prevented from reaching its intended destination. In addition, the filter engine 78 may log the filtered packet and notify the user of the action taken by it." (col. 7, lines 50-67)

Thus, Abraham's "filter executive" merely generates the rules by which the filter engine filters the incoming packets. In sharp contrast, applicant teaches and claims a second data processing unit adapted to "process incoming packets according to one of said plurality of instruction sets" (emphasis added). Only applicant teaches and claims such a combination

of features and components for providing a filtering first data processing unit working in conjunction with a second data processing unit that processes the filtered data packets.

With respect to Claim 19 et al., the Examiner relies on the following excerpt from Abraham to meet applicant's claimed "assigning a first thread to the first incoming packet if said first incoming packet is admitted, wherein said first thread points to a stored policy" and "processing the first incoming packet according to said stored policy."

"FIG. 4 is a block diagram of the component parts of the network management program 80 as distributed among the various computers and servers connected to the LAN 44. The GUI 70 of each administrative computer 54 and the network server 50 communicate the information and policies input by the operators of those computers to the rules and logging database 72 located on the network server 50 via the LAN 44. These policies are stored and processed by the rules and logging database 72, which then passes the user policies along to the filter executive 76 along with mapping information for each user. The filter executive 76 optimizes the policies into a set of rules for each user and passes the rules and user mapping information to the filter engine 78. The filter engine 78 filters all outbound IP packets transmitted from the LAN 44 to the Internet 40 and verifies all inbound IP packets from the Internet 40 according to the rules provided to the filter engine 78 by the filter executive 76. As this occurs, the naming services manager 74 provides the filter executive 76 with updated mapping information which the filter executive then passes on to the filter engine 78 so that the filter engine begins and ceases filtering of IP packets dynamically as users log into and out of the LAN 44." (col. 9, lines 43-65)

However, in such excerpt, there is simply no disclosure, teaching or even suggestion of any sort of assigning of a first thread to a first incoming packet if it is not filtered, and then processing such specific packet based on a policy that corresponds to such thread.

Only applicant teaches and claims such a feature for filtering packets and assigning admitted packets a thread that has an associated policy to be used to process such specific-thread packets. In sharp contrast, Abraham falls short by merely suggesting rule-based filtering, not filtering followed by processing that is specifically configured based on a policy associated with a thread assigned to packets admitted after filtering.

To further emphasize this distinction and in the spirit of expediting the prosecution of the present application, applicant now claims:

“a second data processing unit adapted to process incoming packets according to one of said plurality of instruction sets after the filtering, based on a thread assigned to the incoming packets by the first data processing unit” (emphasis added - see Claim 1 et al.); and

“determining whether to admit the first incoming packet using filtering; assigning a first thread to the first incoming packet if said first incoming packet is admitted after the filtering, wherein said first thread points to a stored policy” (emphasis added - see Claim 19 et al.).

A notice of allowance or specific prior art showing of such features, in combination with the remaining claim elements, is respectfully requested.

It appears that the Examiner's rejection is further deficient with respect to many of applicant's dependent claims. For example, the Examiner relies on col. 7; col. 5, lines 46-67; and col. 6, lines 1-4 to meet applicant's claimed:

“wherein at least one of said policies comprises:

- a first address pointer element for identifying the location in said addressable memory unit of one of said plurality of instruction sets, and
- a second address pointer element for identifying the location in said addressable memory unit of a state block” (see Claim 4 et al.).

However, there are simply no first and second address pointers in such excerpts, let alone pointer elements associated with policies, where a first pointer element is for identifying the location of one of said plurality of instruction sets and a second pointer element is for identifying the location of a state block. Again, a notice of allowance or specific prior art showing of the specific features of all of the dependent claims, in combination with the remaining claim elements, is respectfully requested.

Applicant further brings to the Examiner's attention new Claim 30 which includes features that are deemed to be novel over the prior art of record. Just by way of example, Claim 30 requires, in addition to the features mentioned above, various other features such as an apparatus that includes “a control logic unit coupled to an input and the policy condition

table for feeding an arithmetic logic unit, which is in turn coupled to the policy action table and the state block for generating an output.”

Thus, all of the independent claims are deemed allowable. By virtue of their dependence on such independent claims, all of the remaining claims are further deemed allowable.

Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

In the event a telephone conversation would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner may reach the undersigned at (408) 505-5100. For payment of the fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, the Commissioner is authorized to charge such fees to Deposit Account No. 50-1351 (Order No. NAI1P069_99.074.01).

Respectfully submitted,
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